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P A P E R
IN
P O L I T E A R T S.

ENGRAVING IN MEZZOTINTO ON STEEL.

*The GOLD ISIS MEDAL was this Session given to
Mr. LUPTON, of Leigh-street, Burton Crescent,
for a Portrait in MEZZOTINTO ON SOFT STEEL.
Two impressions from the Plate, are in the posses-
sion of the Society, and the following Letter on the
subject has been received from the Candidate.*

SIR ;

7, Leigh-street, Burton-Crescent.
November 1st 1822.

SINCE I had the honour of receiving the Gold Isis Medal of the Society, for an engraving in Mezzotinto, on a steel plate, I have had many opportunities of ascertaining its decided superiority over copper-plates. As certain

circumstances prevented my printing the plate of Mr. Munden to any extent, I lost no time in producing another steel plate, which was destined to undergo a fair trial, and in this particular it fulfilled my most sanguine expectations; fifteen hundred copies have been taken off; and, in order that the Society may have the fullest opportunity of judging of the durability of steel plates, I send along with the Portrait of Mr. Munden, two impressions of the plate above mentioned, one of them a proof before the writing, the other one of the last of the fifteen hundred. An impartial view of these will set the matter quite at rest. It is difficult to conceive, what number this plate would produce, if printed until it was worn out. I have no doubt, however, that steel plates in Mezzotinto, will produce eight or ten times the number of those engraved on copper. It may perhaps, be expected, that some novelty, in the mode of executing the steel plates, would be now elicited, but in strict truth, there is little or nothing to be said on that point; the same tools are used, and the same mode of executing adopted as upon copper plates, the only difference I know of is, that greater strength must be used in laying the Mezzotinto ground; indeed it requires a very strong hand, and a greater number of ways.* I have laid as many as ninety ways on some plates, whereas, on copper, the usual number is from twenty-four, to thirty-six, or forty. As to the making of steel plates, I conceive this art to be quite in its infancy; however, several intelligent men are engaged in it, and I presume we shall not long meet with any difficulty; at present I have nothing further to observe, than that great care is necessary to pre-

* A way is going once entirely over the plate with the grounding tool,

vent the plates taking rust; I have met with one or two serious accidents in this way: I believe it would be a matter worthy the consideration of the Society, to offer a reward for an acid, for etching on steel, as that now seems to be the chief difficulty in its way.

I am, Sir,

&c. &c. &c.

THOMAS LUPTON.

A. Aikin, Esq.

Sec., &c. &c.